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## BOOK NOTICES.

*The Relations of Geography and History*, by Rev. H. B. George, M.A.,  
Fellow of New College. Oxford, Clarendon Press. Small 8vo,  
296 pp.

This is a welcome volume; for there has been little attempt to deal in a systematic way with the influence of geographic environment upon historical movements. In such essays as we have there is much loose assertion, made without proof of genuine causal relations. This author, at the outset, places a temperate estimate upon the effects of environment, and thus prepares us to consider seriously what he has to say.

The first eight chapters, nearly one-third of the volume, are given to an account of general principles, under such heads as frontiers, towns, nomenclature, sea power in peace and war, and geography in war. Under frontiers, natural boundaries such as mountain ranges, hill country, and rivers are treated, with considerable reference to defence and invasion. Town sites always have interest, in the great diversity and combinations of causal conditions, such as defensibility, depth of adjacent waters, and industrial possibilities. There is an interesting reference to Bristol, once the second city of England, and perhaps excelling even London in its shipping. Glasgow and Liverpool have left Bristol far in the rear, because the Avon does not offer easy access to large modern vessels.

History and geography are brought into close relation by nomenclature, and geographic nomenclature is well called "fossil history." Here is a little-worked field for geographers who have leanings toward history, and who can restrain themselves from vague philological speculation. Europe is usually cited as rich in examples of geographic nurseries; hence our author is out of the beaten track when he tells us that few natural boundaries in Europe are so definite as to require them to be political frontiers. The British Isles, the Spanish peninsula, Italy, and Scandinavia about conclude the list. One would think that the Grecian peninsula might be added. Easy havoc is made with Wordsworth's lines, in which he calls the mountains and the sea the natural homes of liberty. Mountain life is "compatible with the most backward civilization, with great capacity for tyrannizing over others." A

rather good case is made out from the Scottish Highlands and some of the cantons of Switzerland.

Environment does not produce, or at least does not insure, power on the sea, for the Spaniard had unsurpassed opportunities, but has never equalled Englishman, Dutchman, or even the French. Nor does race altogether determine who will love and follow the sea: the Boers certainly had maritime ancestors, but are now strangely averse to the ocean.

The rest of the volume is mainly devoted to the countries of Europe, in separate treatment, beginning with a general discussion of the Outlines of Europe. The chapter on the British Islands could hardly be other than good, for here many principles apply without question, and the writer is on his native soil. Absolutely primitive man has afforded no remains in Britain, but this was to be expected, for strong boats are required to cross waters as wide as the Straits of Dover, and such craft could only be fashioned by men who had made considerable progress in the arts. There is an excellent passage on the insularity of Britain, a condition, perhaps, more controlling than all other geographic considerations combined. The Norman invasion was successful largely because England was not united, and in a few generations Edward I, almost pure Norman by descent, was yet "English to the backbone." Military service, lasting a bare forty days, would not do for an island which had business of war on the mainland, and hence the crown grew in power at the expense of the nobility. There could be no sudden attacks, no disputes about doubtful boundaries, and there has been no real invasion since the Norman conquest.

Ireland is too small to form an independent nation, and is related to Britain by being on the outer side, instead of lying between it and the continent, where it might have been a bone of contention between Britain and the continental peoples. Holland, like Britain, is at the centre of the land hemisphere, and has exceptional maritime advantages; but she is not insular, whatever other reasons there may be for her inferiority to Great Britain. Within England, geographic conditions are now exercising an enormous influence in shifting the centre of population northward toward the country of coal and iron.

These must serve as samples of the interesting suggestions found everywhere in the volume. The single chapter of six pages on America is, of course, altogether inadequate. Any one who is familiar with the powerful influence of the Appalachian barrier in our history is surprised to read that, "When the white men, hav-

ing settled along the Atlantic coast, began to push their way westward they encountered no geographical obstacles." But this is a small fault in a scholarly and useful volume.

A. P. B.

*Mont Pelée and the Tragedy of Martinique*, by Angelo Heilprin. 8vo, 335 pp., with map and many illustrations. J. B. Lippincott Company.

Professor Heilprin's reputation as an observer and writer would lead one to anticipate a vivid and authoritative presentation of the great catastrophe. This expectation is fulfilled in the volume before us. We have the story of three ascents of Pelée, and of some weeks spent in its neighbourhood, as well as the accounts of resident observers here reproduced. The author brings out very fully the alarming events of the days preceding the cataclysm of May 8, and makes the false security of the people seem incomprehensible. The warnings would certainly have been heeded but for the authority of a few trusted advisers.

Naturally, among the absorbing chapters are those describing "the last day of Saint Pierre" (V), the destruction of May 8 (III), and the author's third ascent, that of August 30, on the evening of which Morne Rouge was destroyed and a large additional region devastated (Battling with Pelée, Ch. XV). Chapter XII has deep interest in its story of the tragic end of the devoted Père Mary, faithful to his spiritual charge to the last. Chapter VIII draws a parallel between Pelée and Vesuvius, and places some interesting question marks upon the ordinary geological teaching about Vesuvius. The closing chapter reviews in a summary way the phenomena of the eruption. Perhaps the passage of greatest interest in this chapter gives the author's conclusions as to the origin and aiming of the fiery blast that destroyed Saint Pierre:

A volume of steam with intense explosive energy rising to the crater-mouth, blowing out in its first paroxysm a part of the crater-floor, and then exploding in free air under a heavily-depressing cushion of ascending steam and ash, and with surrounding walls of rock on three sides and more to form an inner casing to nature's giant mortar. The blast was forced through the open cut, or lower lip of the crater, that was directed to Saint Pierre.

A. P. B.

*The Hudson River, from Ocean to Source*, by Edgar Mayhew Bacon, with 100 illustrations, and with sectional map of the Hudson River. 590 pp. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

This volume is uniform in appearance and in general character with Reid's Mohawk Valley, issued from the same press one year earlier. It is described upon the title page in the words Historical—